

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

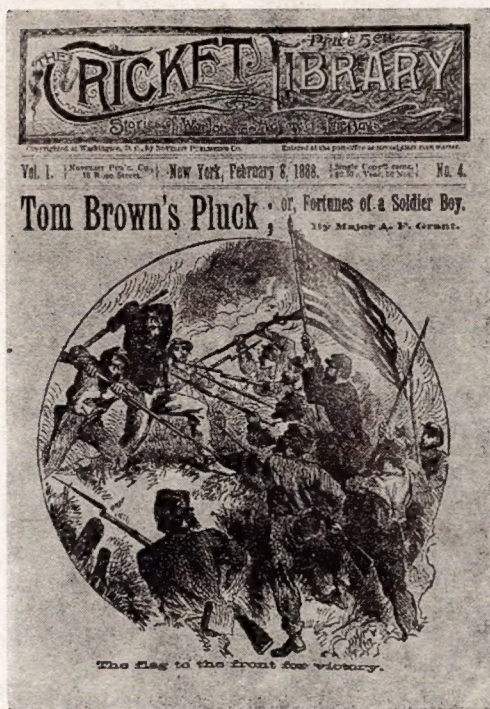
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The Beadle Brothers, Erastus and Irwin

By John C. Kunzog



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES No. 88

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The Beadle Brothers Erastus and Irwin

By John C. Kunzog

Much has been written about Erastus Beadle, originator of the Dime Novel, and many more reams of paper will be used in the continuing flow of stories of the future to delineate the life of the man who placed books within the reach of every lad.

As a printer-author my interest in Beadle was two-fold. I wanted to know more about the man who not only revolutionized the reading habits of a nation, but brought about innovations in the printing industry; and, as a native of Chautauqua County, N. Y. I was anxious to learn just where in this territory young Beadle learned to cut letters from wood.

Every student of Dime Novel history knows by heart the stereotyped story of how Beadle was apprenticed to a miller named Hayes in Chautauqua County, and learned to cut letters from wood, and how, still later, he journeyed to his home in Coopers-town printing feed bags for farmers at a penny a letter. I don't know who first launched this tale, but nearly every writer ever since has used this identical story without analyzing its absurdity.

In the Dime Novel Roundup of October, 1946, I had an article headed: "Beadle and His Types," in which I explained how, with the 26 letters of the alphabet he couldn't even print his name as it required two letter "E's." Also, that while it would have been quite simple to carry the wooden characters in a gunny sack (we call it a burlap bag today) it would have been humanly impossible to tote a press for printing at that period, or today for that matter, as a press of that size would weigh a hundred pounds

or more.

At the period of my aforementioned contribution, I attended the semi-annual gatherings of the Empire State Typographical Conference, and I made known to the printers assembled my quest for information on Beadle. I hit the so-called jackpot twice: William Rhinehart, of Fulton County, N. Y., who had talked with Beadle while he was employed at Cooperstown; William H. Woodside, Pittsburgh, Pa., whose grandfather was brother of Ann S. Stephens, author of *Malaeska*.

Old-timers who enjoyed the yellow-backs or nickel thrillers of a glorious era past, must have come across the term "tramp printer." It is not a misnomer. The printing business always seemed founded on an unstable seesaw—one day up in the realm of activity and profits, then teetering down to the debacle of financial stress. A craftsman of particular skill with a limited demand for his services in a community, he would merely "take to the road" when work became slack or a plant closed.

And that was my case shortly after my article appeared in the Roundup. I had another love to nurse when away from home, and diligently sought the needed information for a more compendious effort—the early circus, which book—no mere child's play—434 pages—I published two years ago.

And while going over the mass of accumulated notes I brought to light items on my earlier research on the Dime Novel. I believe this information should not be lost, so I began a search of records of Chautauqua County. The county historian, Eliza-

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beth L. Crocker, states that no such name as Hayes appeared on the county records at the time Beadle was here, in fact, it doesn't make its appearance until 1880.

This convinced me that William Rhinehart's story of Beadle was more correct and plausible than any, and I now wonder if Beadle may have worked for a farmer named Miller, and labored in the hayfield.

Mr. Rhinehart worked at Coopers-town before the turn of the century and became acquainted with Beadle. The two would sit on the porch of the hotel, making an odd pair. Beadle, in the twilight of life, his heart crying out to relate a story of the injustices of the past; Rhinehart, just out of his apprenticeship, lent an attentive but uninterested ear. They stood on common ground. Both had marshalled the tiny metal symbols into a composing stick to form words, the words forming lines and the lines forming pages. They used the vernacular of the trade. And thus in the sunset of life Erastus Beadle poured out the vials of heartaches and disillusionments to a young printer with a retentive mind who kept in memory's files many details, little dreaming that half a century later the gist of the stories unfolded by Beadle on the hotel porch would be sought so they could be saved for posterity.

Beadle's father was an improvident farmer. As the years piled onto his head and his family increased, he looked for the proverbial hill whose one side was covered with a verdant growth. He gazed westward and in late summer of 1833 the elder Beadle, his wife and three sons went to Kalamazoo County, Mich. Work was started to prepare the new land for spring planting, to erect the necessary shelters for stock, poultry and swine and arrange for farm implements. Then began the task to fell trees and eradicate stumps. It was arduous work to till the unrelenting virgin soil, and Erastus Beadle, aged 12; his brother Irwin, aged 7, performed their daily stint of hard labor. There were constant threats of

encroachment and attacks by wild animals and raids by the Pottawatomies Indians.

The Indians were beggars from habit; if a settler had something they coveted, they brazenly demanded it and made no pretext of payment. They outnumbered the settlers and viewed the whites as trespassers on their rightful domain. Firewater, readily obtainable from some traders, made the Indians ugly and vicious, and many cast lustful eyes on white women. A rifle was ever within reach of the women when the men toiled in the field, while the undulcet clanging of the farm bell or horrified shrieks warned the men folk that Indians were approaching or were already present.

Thus young Beadle learned of the rigors of pioneer life. With his father guiding the oxen to till the soil, Erastus walked alongside, his eyes gazing in all directions, while a loaded rifle was cradled in his arms. At harvest time, the rifle was ever at hand, not only to discourage marauding Indians but to protect the crop from bears, wildcats and deer. Wolves and other predatory animals made nocturnal raids on the henhouse, while the squealing of pigs at night was evidence that bears had gained entrance to the pigpen.

At school the Beadle boys learned many tales of copper-faced braves armed with scalping knife, tomahawk, bow and arrow roaming the fields and forests in quest of food. They heard of the Indians' skill in killing bears, wolves and deer, and of their dexterity in converting the animal pelts into garments. The way of the Indian they heard in classroom and learned by experience at their farm.

For nearly two years the Beadles lived in their Michigan home. The elder Beadle was unable to cope with his new venture. This was not the life they knew in New York State, for when they retired there at night they had no worries until morning, while here a constant vigil was needed to protect themselves and their livestock. Continuing loss of animals and

poultry, and a bigger yield of weeds than field crops helped impoverish Beadle. Wild deer also shattered the hopes of the pioneering family. After tilling a crop through the growing season until ready for harvest, they would awaken some morning to find that a herd of deer had made a sham-ble of the field.

Financially distressed, an ailing wife and three lads all destitute for clothes, the elder Beadle placed what he could salvage from this wilderness debacle into a wagon and the trek to Cooperstown began. At night they would remain at some farmhouse, but because of the number of the group, the three boys invariably slept in the haymow while their parents lodged in the house, many times sleeping on the floor on improvised beds made of bedding they brought with them.

To compensate their hosts the father repaired harness, repaired buildings or a leaky roof. Erastus Beadle pumped and carried water, blacked harness and his benefactor's Sunday boots, greased wagon wheels, cut wood or any of the numerous chores always beckoning on a farm at that period.

Mrs. Beadle performed her stint of work, helping in dyeing, making soap, cooking and baking. For these labors the Beadles received no money, merely lodging and food and when they departed early enough to reach the next farmhouse before darkness, they usually were provided with a basket of food.

Such were the conditions the Beadles experienced on their journey back. At Erie, Pa., the elder Beadle found a few days work that not only provided care for his brood but a little ready cash beside. It was the first money he had for nearly a year.

At Fredonia, N. Y., a town that was to play an important part in the life of Erastus Beadle and Dime Novel history, the sun of opportunity smiled propitiously on the little group of indigent wayfarers. Erastus was offered \$4 a month and keep until the end of the harvest season. The mother at first demurred at leaving the lad

(now 14 years) behind, but after a cursory glance at the bare toes protruding from his boots, his threadbare pantaloons and other tattered garments, she acquiesced.

Erastus proved himself diligent in any given task and endeared himself as a lad of exceptional qualities to his employer, so much so that at the end of the harvest season he was introduced to the printer of the weekly paper. (The Fredonia Censor, founded 1823, suspended 1958). The lad was put to work and offered the opportunity to learn the printer's trade. He wrote to his parents for the required apprenticeship permission, but the mother objected to the lad being that far away from home. Pleading letters from Erastus with the exchange of letters from his parents carried into the winter season. Mail service at that time was slow, and the ground was well covered with snow when Erastus received the definite news that he must return home. Travel under such conditions was out of the question, so the lad assured his parents he would start for home with the advent of warm weather.

In the meantime Erastus learned the rudiments of the trade, learned how to set type, operate the press, and one day when a character was needed for a poster, young Beadle observed the journeyman carving the needed letter from a piece of cherry wood. It was the era of whittling and Erastus prided himself on his ability to wield a knife. So in his spare time he learned the method of cutting letters and set about to carve a complete alphabet for himself.

During press day, as the newspapers came from the press to be folded and readied for mailing, he learned that the price of the papers was five cents a copy, and that advertising revenue yielded about 50% of the income. Why, mentally reasoned Erastus, wouldn't it be possible then to provide youngsters with stories in newspaper form. Books were expensive and few boys could lay claim to the possession of a book. All boys, he knew, were hungering for thrilling

stories to read, and certainly here was a style to make it possible.

It was stated earlier in this article the legend of young Beadle printing grain sacks. Now this is just a supposition on the author's part: In gratitude did Beadle, say as a Christmas gift to his farmer friend, imprint some grain and seed bags, and some writer distort the story into the lad imprinting bags en route to Cooperstown. He may have imprinted the name of the farmer on some burlap sacks used for grain, and also on some cotton drill sacks used at that period for heavy seeds, like corn and beans.

When the warm days of spring arrived, the boy set out for his home where he proudly exhibited his handiwork—the 26 wooden letters. His enthusiasm in being a printer was such that he was apprenticed to the firm of Elihu Phinney & Co., booksellers and book publishers. He learned stereotyping and operation of the different style presses of this concern. Frequently he was called upon to set type, the mechanics of which he had learned at Fredonia. Five years later, when his brother Irwin was 14, he also was apprenticed to the Phinney organization, and a year later the youngest brother, James, also became an apprentice.

Life was moving in a carefree cycle, when in 1847 fire destroyed the Phinney establishment. Not caring to rebuild in Cooperstown, the Phinneys looked for a more fertile field, casting their eyes on Buffalo, N. Y., then a bustling city and known as the Queen City of the Lakes. They purchased F. W. Breed's Book Store. This establishment was merely a retail source for books, blank books, stationery and inks, unlike most book stores in the city that also printed books of their own titles.

Erastus was a competent worker, and he with several others of the employes followed the Phinneys to Buffalo until such time as they could get equipment installed.

In the Buffalo City Directory of 1848-49 appears the name of Erastus

F. Beadle, stereotypes, Jewett, Thomas & Co. And in the same directory is this listing: Phinney & Co., publishers and booksellers, "doing business at F. W. Breed's old stand." Members of the concern are given as Elihu Phinney, Jr., Henry T. Phinney, Fred W. Breed and Edwin Jackson.

The concern where Beadle was employed was the largest printing house in the city, and listed as printers, publishers and stereotypers, with steam power presses. Not only did they execute all kinds of printing from a "card to show and posting bills from mammoth sheets down to ordinary shop bills," they also supplied the trade with paper, cards and inks, printing paper, writing paper, envelope paper, colored papers, writing and printing inks, engraving, lithography and book-binding for the trade was another service. Another branch of the concern at the same address, under the name of Elam R. Jewett & Co., were publishers of the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser, Tri-Weekly Commercial Advertiser, Buffalo Patriot and Journal (weekly), Western Literary Messenger (monthly) and the Buffalo Medical Journal (monthly).

The Commercial Advertiser was a four-page newspaper, 9 columns to the page and printed on a sheet 28x44 inches, known to the craft as a blanket sheet.

It was while working at this establishment that Erastus viewed his story paper in a new perspective. He noticed that the workmen, before starting time and during lunch hour, would read the paper. Being too large to handle readily, they folded the paper several times so it was no larger than 6x14 inches. Holding the paper in one hand and a sandwich or other food item from their lunch pail in the other, they read as they munched. When finished reading the item in view, the paper was refolded to bring other articles for reading. When it was time to commence their labors they would place the folded paper in their pocket and brought forth for perusal when opportunity presented itself.

Erastus decided that instead of bringing out his stories in newspaper form, to issue them as booklets so readers could hold them in one hand. He mentioned his plan to Elihu Phinney, Jr., and found obdurate objection from that worthy. Bibles and religious works were an important part of the Phinney line.

"There are," Mr. Phinney told Beadle, "enough Godless persons without glamorizing the exploits of wanton killers of redmen or the trail of death left by desperadoes."

In the Buffalo Directory of 1850-51 is found the listing of Irwin and James Beadle, who had come to Buffalo at the suggestion of Erastus. James was employed as stereotyper at the same concern where Erastus worked; but Irwin, listed as a book-binder, had no business connection following his name.

The following year Erastus and Irwin opened a stereotype foundry at 6 W. Seneca St. Erastus, with the old mother-hen complex, placed a protective arm around his brother. Irwin, according to Rhinehart, loved to visit the lager saloons. Perhaps he was derelict in his duties as a worker and could not hold down a job. Erastus, forming a partnership with him, hoped the responsibilities of business would make him conscious of his duties.

The Beadle concern made most, if not all, the stereotype plates used by Phinney & Co., and on the title page of many books issued by this concern is the credit line: "Stereotyped by Beadle & Bro."

A brief description of the process of stereotyping at the time the Beadles were operating their plant in Buffalo is in order. There were no typesetting machines, all type was set by hand, a letter at a time. A good typesetter (compositor) could set about 300 words an hour. After the type matter was made up into pages (of forms) it was locked in a chase, the type treated with powdered graphite. A sheet of matrix paper (best described as a sheet of blotting paper

with a sheet of glossy tissue pasted on each side) would be placed on the type form and the stereotyper would impress the type into the matrix paper by a process known as "beating." A brush, about 6x8 inches, with short bristles, on a 30-inch handle, looking much as a large toothbrush, would be used by the stereotyper, who would bring the brush smartly down on the type. The brush had to fall squarely each time to avoid blurring.

The "mat" would then be locked in an iron casting box and a metal composed of lead, tin, antimony and bismuth, heated to 50 degrees, would be poured into the box. When cooled, the resulting stereotype plate would be trimmed and ready for locking up for the press.

The original type used could now be distributed back into the type case for use on other pages or work. Stereotyping is still important in printing, but the matrices today are made by covering mat on the type form with felt pads and the form passes under steel rollers. But at the period the Beadles were operating their plant, they not only had to make their own matrix paper, but the paste as well.

The wraith of his literary dream was still haunting Erastus. Once more he broached the subject of paper-bound novels to Phinney, who again counseled against it but suggested that Beadle consider publishing a monthly magazine for children and even helped arrange for an editor and partner. In the month of January 1852, the first issue of the Youth's Casket made its debut. Its page size was 6x9 inches, with 16 pages. The title page read:

The Youth's Casket
An Illustrated Magazine for Children
Harley Thorne, Editor
Beadle & Vanduzee, publishers
Buffalo 1852
Beadle and Bro., Stereotypers
Phinney & Co., Printers

(to be continued)

Frank Merriwell In the Movies

By Gerald J. McIntosh

There's a lot of things that Frank Merriwell was, but nowhere in the entire Merriwell saga do we find that he was ever any great "shakes" as a moving picture star.

It is possible and I believe highly probable that in the last few decades many a plot for a moving picture was filched from between the covers of a Tip Top Weekly with no one being the wiser except the one who stole the plot. I know for a fact that plots were taken from many other nickel and dime novels and I know of one set of periodicals were damaged to a great extent by the thumbing through of the copies.

I have printed proof of at least two "movies" in which Frank Merriwell was the star. Beyond that I don't know. About 1914 there was shown on the screen a picture called "Frank Merriwell In Arizona," which was a western undoubtedly. Tip Top No. 16, back in 1896, was titled "Frank Merriwell In Arizona; or, The Mysteries Of The Mine." Frank's father figured in this tale, and conceivably, it could have been the basis for the plot in the moving picture of the same name. I, of course, did not see it or even know of it, as in 1914 I was pretty much of a "country boy" and didn't see a movie as often as once a year. Western movies were all the "go" those days as they still are.

I repeat, I believe this to have been in 1914, though I am not positive. It was at this time there appeared a letter in the "Compass" or "Applause" of New Tip Top Weekly No. 118 of Oct. 31, 1914, a letter from a reader stating he thought it would be a good plan to show some of the Merriwell stories in motion pictures as it would advertise the Weekly. The editor, at that time F. E. Blackwell, commented that "some of the Merriwell stories are being shown in motion pictures."

Possibly, "Frank Merriwell In Arizona" was among the "some" other

pictures editor Blackwell was referring to. Of this we have no way of knowing and I have no record of other Merriwell movies that appeared at this period. In "Newsy News" of DNR No. 359 there is a listing of some show cards used to advertise "Frank Merriwell In Arizona"—at a rather stiff price I thought. I wanted to acquire these for my Merriwelliana collection but the price asked by the owner scared me away. These same cards were previously mentioned in DNR No. 345.

Well, time reels away pretty fast in a lot of movies at any time and it also gets by us in real life, too. We now jump from 1914 to 1925. In this interval of about 11 years I know of nothing made public about Merriwell in the movies. In Ralph Smith's Happy Hours Magazine for March-April, 1925, which was No. 2 of the Mag., Ralph informs us that Burt L. Standish had gone to California to supervise putting on the screen the adventures of his creation, Frank Merriwell. Yet, nothing came of it immediately that I know of. In his Mag. No. 58, September-October, 1934, Ralph has a quote credited to Harold C. Holmes, in which Holmes says: "Louis Sobol, the columnist who writes for the New York Journal, had a note in his syndicated column, saying how tickled he was that Frank Merriwell was to be filmed. Haven't heard of it since, but how many know that Frank Merriwell was filmed before, back in the days of the silent films? Whether more than one was filmed or not I don't know, but this one appeared around 1910 and was Tip Top No. 255, "Frank Merriwell's Scheme; or, The Daring Deception Of Dr. Cloud!"—End of Quote. This was in 1934. Mr. Holmes, at that time a member of our Round-Up, now long since deceased, had probably recently read some news dispatch saying that Frank Merriwell was soon to be seen on the screen.

It was still 1934 and the Great Depression was at its worst. Gilbert Patten, so the story goes, was faced with some lean times like so many of the rest of us. Nine years had gone by since it was announced that he had gone to California to help put Frank Merriwell on the screen, yet no picture had been produced so far as we knew. On May 26 there appeared in the newspapers an article that perked up my ears. I presume that it was printed nation-wide as it was in both our local morning and afternoon local journals. I quote it in part:

Frank Merriwell In Another Battle

Frank Merriwell, who eschewed tobacco, foreswore swearing and drink, has come in the full glory of his manhood into a federal court.

His creator, W. Gilbert Patten, has asked that the Superior Talking Pictures, Inc., be enjoined from using the name Frank Merriwell in a series of short films it has produced.

Merriwell, as a hundred million nickel-novel readers will attest, was the embodiment of all that is clean, good and brave; Frank Merriwell, boy and man, preserved the honor of dear old Yale for 986 consecutive weeks. He performed his weekly heroics from April, 1896, to January, 1915.

During this period of acquiring an education Frank dropkicked his schools to approximately 100 victories in the last five second of play, hit an incalculable number of home runs over an incalculable number of fences and escaped disaster on an average of once a week.

Patten, who feels that if Superior Talking Pictures, Inc., went ahead with its Frank Merriwell series, he would be damaged \$250,000 worth, said the Merriwell stories had circulated 123,600,000 copies to date.

End of the news item which had come out of New York City. More than two years later, in the fall of 1936, a local theatre announced that there was coming, the "Adventures Of Frank Merriwell." Again, my ears "perked up."

It was announced there would be twelve weekly episodes devoted to

Frank's "Adventures." Eventually, Frank arrived at the Rex Theatre and on time as was his custom. By this time I had sufficiently recovered from the staggering blow of Old Man Depression that I could spare two dimes a week for entertainment, such as it was, so I resolved to see the adventures I had read so much about, and take my six year old son, Charles along. We went. And continued to see them to the bitter end.

My son literally ate up the stuff, but he never became a Merriwell addict as a result of seeing them. I was only mildly interested in the series for Frank was not the Merriwell I had read about. But of course I had to look at it from the angle that they were produced in a modern setting, that is, what was meant by "modern" in the 1930's. They were stories of life at college, with plenty else doing with life away from a college campus.

Instead of coming from the Superior Talking Pictures, Inc., they were produced by Universal Picture Corporation, Universal City, California. I wrote them for some literature on the pictures and they sent me a list of the cast of players. Titles of the 12 weekly episodes follow:

1. The Colloge Hero.
2. The Death Plunge.
3. Death At The Cross Roads.
4. Wreck Of The Viking.
5. Capsized In The Cataract.
6. Descending Doom.
7. Monster Of The Deep.
8. The Tragic Victory.
9. Between Savage Foes.
10. ----- ?
11. The Crash In The Chasm.
12. The Winning Play.

From this it can be inferred that the action might have been pretty fast and furious, and I must confess it was pretty lively at times. But the magnetic lure and the interesting situations that developed in the stories in Tip Top Weekly, just weren't there and didn't hold for me.

The part of Frank Merriwell was played by Don Briggs. Other Tip Top characters in the series were Bruce Browning, Harry Rattleton, Carlos

Merriwell — the dastardly cousin of Frank Merriwell in the very early Tip Tops, Elsie Bellwood and her father. Mr. Merriwell, Frank's father and Mrs. Merriwell. Of course there were numerous other non-Tip Top characters.

The villain of the series was one Dagget, who seemed to be a combination of Porfiras del Norte, Sport Harris, Evan Hartwick, Rolf Harlow, Roland Ditson, Dion Santenel and other enemies of Frank, plus Bluebeard and Capt. Kid thrown in. He wore a patch over his left eye, pirate style.

Since the above series of pictures on Frank Merriwell I know of nothing else that has appeared in moving pictures about him. Certainly this series on him created no sensation and no long lines of patrons were seen standing at the box office waiting to buy tickets. It seem that in this fast day and age, that Frank Merriwell, even at his "wildest," could not arouse the movie-going folks to any sort of a stampede to see him, for something faster and more furious is demanded. The old lure for Merriwell seems gone, destined to never return. That generation has passed.

Occasionally there is a "flash" on TV that mentions him or is concerned with him. In more than one instance I have seen the cover of a Tip Top shown in some news story. In the 1950's a 90 minute "spectacular" on him was projected but it came to naught. A pilot-film on Frank as late as July, 1966 was a most miserable flop, so say those who saw it. Yes, the Merriwell generation has gone.

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. LeBlanc: All of the people with whom I have come into contact, and had dealings, through the Dime Novel Roundup, and from the time of my first correspondence with you, have been so very kind and helpful. It has been a great pleasure to deal with them. Maybe it is be-

cause a bit of nostalgia helps to make people warmer and more generous. Maybe it is our age—but there are people who get crusty and disagreeable with age. But maybe, just maybe, it is that a little of the old Frank Merriwell philosophy still lingers among those who grew up with him.—W. B. Ragsdale, Washington, D. C.

Dear Ed: Enclosed find my annual renewal of my subscription to the Roundup, a magazine that brightens the memories and hearts of its readers.—Dan Driscoll, Brooklyn, N. Y. (Thanks for the bouquets.)

Dear Mr. LeBlanc:

I am hopeful that either you or your readers may be able to assist me in obtaining materials for my current research on Mayne Reid, the nineteenth-century British author who wrote many juvenile titles and adventure books based on his experiences in the United States.

Captain Reid's widow, Elizabeth Reid, wrote a memoir of her husband's life, the second (1900) edition of which reads "assisted by Charles H. Coe, of U. S. A. Author of 'Red Patriots,' etc." In 1927 Mr. Coe published a book, "Juggling a Rope . . . The Truth About Tom Horn, 'King of the Cowboys,'" published in Pendleton, Oregon.

I am trying to find information on Mr. Coe in the hope that Mrs. Reid may have given him some papers or had correspondence with him that would be useful to me in my research.

I am also interested in learning if there are any living descendants of Capt. Reid, in the hopes that they may have some manuscript materials or other documents in their possession.

I would be very grateful for any information about either Mr. Coe or Capt. Reid. Thank you for your courtesy.

Joan Steele
Dept. of English, UCLA
405 Hilgard Ave.
Los Angeles, Cal. 90024

NEWSY NEWS

Ralph F. Cummings

The Bangor Daily News, Oct. 19th, 1966, has a very fine article on "Author's Anniversary Noted, Corinna, Maine—Oct. 25, 1966 is an important day for the people of Corinna, because it is the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Gilbert Patten, a distinguished Corinna man. Very few know him by that name. Millions, however, know him by his pen name of Burt L. Standish, under which he wrote his famous Frank and Dick Merriwell Series for boys stories. Gil Patten married Alice Gardiner of Corinna. They had one son, H. Barr Patten, who made his home in Vista, Calif. Gil Patten and Alice were divorced in 1898, 2 years later, he married Mary Nunn of Baltimore, Md., in 1900. They were divorced in 1916. So Gil married the third time to Carol Kramer of New York City in 1918. He seemed to be happy with her—she died in 1939.

In all his writings, Gil wrote under various pen names, such as William George Patten, William Gilbert Patten, George W. Patten, and Gilbert Patten, as well as Burt L. Standish, and other pen names.

Gil was born in Corinna, Maine, on Oct. 25th, 1866.

Besides writing the Tip Top Wkly, Medal and New Medal, etc., he also wrote for several magazines. About 1942 or '43 Gil moved to California to live with his son. He died on Jan. 10th, 1945.

Beadles Dime and Half Dime libraries had quite a lot of his stories in them. His western travels helped him acquire the background for his Wyoming Bill series.

This clipping sent to me from Carl and Herbert Kenney.

Irene Gurman writes: Do you have any idea where the Alger story called "Kit Watson's Triumph," always listed among some of the Brave and Bold publications by Street & Smith has its origin? It was published there as the "Young Acrobat," and which is the original title—but on every

book list I've seen they say Kit Watson's Triumph" the title was used in the Brave and Bold colored cover series, and I'm sure having a time tracking this one down. (I don't believe it ever came out in Brave and Bold—Cummings.) (Ed. note: "Kit Watson's Triumph" appeared as a serial in Nos. 1 through 13 of Half Holiday. Feb. 5, 1898, to April 30, 1898. The story was never published in Brave and Bold. For full particulars see Ralph Gardner's book, "Horatio Alger" published by the Way-side Press.)

R. H. Porter is sweet on dime novels about the James Boys. Also anything on Sam Hall or Texas Jack. His address, P. O. Box 38, Austin, Texas 78767.

J. Randolph Cox of Northfield, Minn., loves the old Shadow and Doc Savage comic strip series put out by Street & Smith, says there were over a hundred of them, and he has 40 or 50 of them now.

Wm. M. Claggert has had several circus visitors since Christmas. Mr. Roger Boyd, equestrian director of the King Bro. Circus and his son, Roger, Jr., wire walker and juggler, also with the King show.

I happened to come across a clipping put out by some book store that had for sale in one of their catalogues, that Jim Cummins, written up by Ralph Cummings in Happy Hours Mag for March-April 1927, gives correct list of members of the James and Younger Outlaw Band, has price listed at \$4.00. They must think they have a real treasure? This sure is something to brag about.

Mrs. Fred P. Pitzer of Jersey City, N. J., writes that her youngest son, Mel Pitzer, was an X-Ray technician in the Presbyterian Hospital in New York and wrote western pulp magazines part time, although he was well paid for each story. He was engaged to a girl whom he went with 8 years. She always wanted him to be a doctor but he didn't care to, so she broke the engagement, left him, and went to California. He never bothered with girls after that. He was 30 years old

at the time. His mother says I would of enjoyed corresponding with him, and I am sure I would have, indeed. He was 47 when he passed away, in 1955. Had a stroke and went into a coma and in 24 hours he was gone. He wrote for the Westerns in the 40's and perhaps early 50's.

Fred P. Pitzer was a member of H. H. Bro. some years back. He was a great circus man, as well as a great writer, editor of Circus Saints and Sinners Club of New York, of which he was one of the organizers. He also wrote over 1500 jokes. He was a great humorist. His wife says Fred was a wonderful husband, she never wanted for anything, and never went anywhere without her. He was a very religious man as well as jolly. They were in church when he had a heart attack, and passed away within an hour. That was on March 2, 1960. Their oldest son passed away after 15 weeks in the hospital on May 11, 1960.

There is a very fine article on "The Lost Love of Jim Younger," in the "Old West" magazine, in the Spring 1967 issue, on pages 18, 19 and 36.

Charles Jonas wrote to William J. Benners in April 27, 1938, that the Broadway and Temperance libraries were nothing but junk. Maybe they are, but ye editor of this column would like to get a copy of the Temperance Library. Who has a copy to spare—maybe they were junk at one time, but they aren't junk now.

Clarence R. Robinson of Lancaster, Ohio, says that Nick Carter carried enough stuff in his pockets, disguises of all kinds, etc., that it was a wonder he could walk.

Mrs. Harold Poore, Anderson, Ind., writes that her husband, Harold, died April 22, 1966, of a heart attack, af-

ter being in the hospital for 3 weeks. (She still has all his books yet.)

Mrs. Levi Morgan, of Washington, D. C., writes she lost her husband, Dec. 22nd 1964. Levi had a lot of Tip Tops and Rough Rider Weeklies. Her address is Mrs. Levi Morgan, 7605 Morningside Drive, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20012. I believe she still has his collection. Any one interested?

Along in June 1966 Peter Scalls and his wife took a trip to Atlantic City, N. J., also Pennsylvania, for a week. While his car was parked in Atlantic City, some one broke into it and cleaned out all their coats and personal stuff. Pete had a brief case with all his book want lists in it, also dime novel lists, etc., as well as pulp magazines and old comic book lists that he spent many days making up, also nos. 1 to 9 of Fame and Fortune Weekly that he brought along with him to read. Said they notified the police, right after it happened, but since then he hasn't heard a word. Pete said it was lucky they didn't steal the car. Pete should have hired either Nick Carter or Old Broadbrim right away—he'd of had all his stuff back by now, if he had.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

Chicago Tribune Sunday Magazine, Mar. 19, 1967—THAT WONDERFUL NICKEL AND DIME WORLD, by Vincent Starrett. A nostalgic article about the writer's association with dime novels as a youngster and a capsule history taken from Mary Noel's article in American Heritage and Pearson's "Dime Novels." An excellent article well illustrated with color reproductions of covers from Nick

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 266. Univ. of Hawaii Library, c/o The Baker & Taylor Co., 380 Edison Way, Reno, Nevada 89502.
- 267. Joseph Kraus, 12 Elia St., Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580.
- 268. Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan Univ., Mt. Pleasant, Mich. 48858.
- 269. Dwight E. Smith, P. O. Box 142, Fitchville, Conn. 06334.

Carter Weekly, Motor Stories, James Boys Weekly and Wild West Weekly.

Same issue of Chicago Tribune — **AND THE GREATEST HERO OF ALL** by Irwin Ross. A history of Frank Merriwell from the author's association as a reader and champion of Frank. Color illustration of Tip Top Weekly. A companion article to the first.

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NOTE

Mr. Leo Moore's ad in the March issue of the Roundup listed "Changed Signals." The correct title is "Crossed Signals." If you have this title for sale contact Leo at 16412 Gentry Lane, Huntington Beach, Calif. 92647.

Back numbers Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup, Nos. 1 to 237, some reprints, 12 for \$1.00 or all for \$21. Sent postpaid. You also get Dime Novel Catalogue, Birthday No. 2, indexes, #1 Pioneer and Scouts of the West.

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